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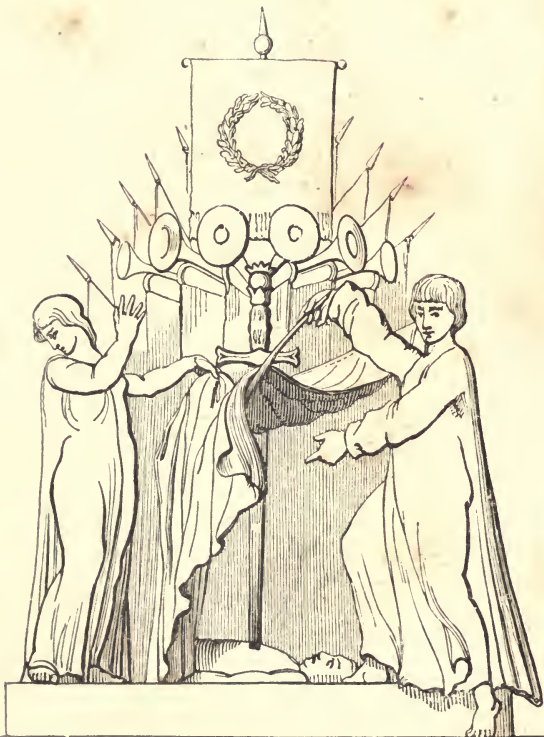
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[To face the Title.

CAPTAIN SWORD AND CAPTAIN PEN.

A Poem.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

WITH SOME REMARKS ON

WAR AND MILITARY STATESMEN.

— If there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attained,
Without ambition, war, or violence.—MILTON.

LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT, LUDGATE STREET.

1835.



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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE

LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX,

WITH WHOM THE WRITER HUMBLY DIFFERS ON SOME POINTS,

BUT DEEPLY RESPECTS FOR HIS MOTIVES ON ALL ;

GREAT IN OFFICE FOR WHAT HE DID FOR THE WORLD,

GREATER OUT OF IT IN CALMLY AWAITING HIS TIME TO DO MORE ;

THE PROMOTER OF EDUCATION ; THE EXPEDITER OF JUSTICE ;

THE LIBERATOR FROM SLAVERY ; .

AND (WHAT IS THE RAREST VIRTUE IN A STATESMAN)

ALWAYS A DENOUNCER OF WAR,

These Pages are Inscribed

BY HIS EVER AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,

Jan. 30, 1835.

LEIGH HUNT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Poem is the result of a sense of duty, which has taken the Author from quieter studies during a great public crisis. He obeyed the impulse with joy, because it took the shape of verse; but with more pain, on some accounts, than he chooses to express. However, he has done what he conceived himself bound to do; and if every zealous lover of his species were to express his feelings in like manner, to the best of his ability, individual opinions, little in

themselves, would soon amount to an overwhelming authority, and hasten the day of reason and beneficence.

The measure is regular with an irregular aspect,—four accents in a verse,—like that of *Christabel*, or some of the poems of Sir Walter Scott :

Captain Swòrd got ùp one dày—

And the flàg full of hònour, as thòugh it could feèl—

He mentions this, not, of course, for readers in general, but for the sake of those daily acceders to the list of the reading public, whose knowledge of books is not yet equal to their love of them.





STEPPING IN MUSIC AND THUNDER SWEET,
WHICH HIS DRUMS SENT BEFORE HIM INTO THE STREET.

Canto I. p. 1.

CAPTAIN SWORD AND CAPTAIN PEN.

I.

HOW CAPTAIN SWORD MARCHED TO WAR.

CAPTAIN Sword got up one day,
Over the hills to march away,
Over the hills and through the towns,
They heard him coming across the downs,
Stepping in music and thunder sweet,
Which his drums sent before him into the street.
And lo! 'twas a beautiful sight in the sun;
For first came his foot, all marching like one,
With tranquil faces, and bristling steel,

And the flag full of honour as though it could feel,
And the officers gentle, the sword that hold
'Gainst the shoulder heavy with trembling gold,
And the massy tread, that in passing is heard,
Though the drums and the music say never a word.

And then came his horse, a clustering sound
Of shapely potency, forward bound,
Glossy black steeds, and riders tall,
Rank after rank, each looking like all,
Midst moving repose and a threatening charm,
With mortal sharpness at each right arm,
And hues that painters and ladies love,
And ever the small flag blush'd above.

And ever and anon the kettle-drums beat
Hasty power midst order meet;

And ever and anon the drums and fifes
Came like motion's voice, and life's;
Or into the golden grandeurs fell
Of deeper instruments, mingling well,
Burdens of beauty for winds to bear;
And the cymbals kiss'd in the shining air,
And the trumpets their visible voices rear'd,
Each looking forth with its tapestried beard,
Bidding the heavens and earth make way
For Captain Sword and his battle-array.

He, nevertheless, rode indifferent-eyed,
As if pomp were a toy to his manly pride,
Whilst the ladies lov'd him the more for his scorn,
And thought him the noblest man ever was born,
And tears came into the bravest eyes,
And hearts swell'd after him double their size,

And all that was weak, and all that was strong,
Seem'd to think wrong's self in him could not be wrong;
Such love, though with bosom about to be gored,
Did sympathy get for brave Captain Sword.

So, half that night, as he stopp'd in the town,
'Twas all one dance, going merrily down,
With lights in windows and love in eyes,
And a constant feeling of sweet surprise;
But all the next morning 'twas tears and sighs;
For the sound of his drums grew less and less,
Walking like carelessness off from distress;
And Captain Sword went whistling gay,
“ Over the hills and far away.”

II.

HOW CAPTAIN SWORD WON A GREAT VICTORY.

THROUGH fair and through foul went Captain Sword,
Pacer of highway and piercer of ford,
Steady of face in rain or sun,
He and his merry men, all as one;
Till they came to a place, where in battle-array
Stood thousands of faces, firm as they,
Waiting to see which could best maintain
Bloody argument, lords of pain;
And down the throats of their fellow-men
Thrust the draught never drunk again.

It was a spot of rural peace,
Ripening with the year's increase
And singing in the sun with birds,
Like a maiden with happy words—
With happy words which she scarcely hears
In her own contented ears,
Such abundance feeleth she
Of all comfort carelessly,
Throwing round her, as she goes,
Sweet half-thoughts on lily and rose,
Nor guesseth what will soon arouse
All ears—that murder's in the house ;
And that, in some strange wrong of brain,
Her father hath her mother slain.

Steady ! steady ! The masses of men
Wheel, and fall in, and wheel again,
Softly as circles drawn with pen.

Then a gaze there was, and valour, and fear,
And the jest that died in the jester's ear,
And preparation, noble to see,
Of all-accepting mortality ;
Tranquil Necessity gracing Force ;
And the trumpets danc'd with the stirring horse ;
And lordly voices, here and there,
Call'd to war through the gentle air ;
When suddenly, with its voice of doom,
Spoke the cannon 'twixt glare and gloom,
Making wider the dreadful room :
On the faces of nations round
Fell the shadow of that sound.

Death for death ! The storm begins ;
Rush the drums in a torrent of dins ;
Crash the muskets, gash the swords ;

Shoes grow red in a thousand fords ;
Now for the flint, and the cartridge bite ;
Darkly gathers the breath of the fight,
Salt to the palate and stinging to sight ;
Muskets are pointed they scarce know where,
No matter : Murder is cluttering there.
Reel the hollows : close up ! close up !
Death feeds thick, and his food is his cup.
Down go bodies, snap burst eyes ;
Trodden on the ground are tender cries ;
Brains are dash'd against plashing ears ;
Hah ! no time has battle for tears ;
Cursing helps better—cursing, that goes
Slipping through friends' blood, athirst for foes'.
What have soldiers with tears to do?—
We, who this mad-house must now go through,
This twenty-fold Bedlam, let loose with knives—



T. L. MOSE

J. J. S.

DOWN GO BODIES—SNAP BURST EYES—
TROD ON THE GROUND ARE TENDER CRIES.

Canto II. p. 8.

To murder, and stab, and grow liquid with lives —
Gasping, staring, treading red mud,
Till the drunkenness' self makes us steady of blood ?

[Oh ! shrink not thou, reader ! Thy part's in it too ;
Has not thy praise made the thing they go through
Shocking to read of, but noble to do ?]

No time to be “breather of thoughtful breath”
Has the giver and taker of dreadful death.
See where comes the horse-tempest again,
Visible earthquake, bloody of mane !
Part are upon us, with edges of pain ;
Part burst, riderless, over the plain,
Crashing their spurs, and twice slaying the slain.
See, by the living God ! see those foot
Charging down hill — hot, hurried, and mute !

They loll their tongues out ! Ah-hah ! pell-mell !
Horses roll in a human hell ;
Horse and man they climb one another —
Which is the beast, and which is the brother ?
Mangling, stifling, stopping shrieks
With the tread of torn-out cheeks,
Drinking each other's bloody breath —
Here's the fleshliest feast of Death.
An odour, as of a slaughter-house,
The distant raven's dark eye bows.

Victory ! victory ! Man flies man ;
Cannibal patience hath done what it can —
Carv'd, and been carv'd, drunk the drinkers down,
And now there is one that hath won the crown :
One pale visage stands lord of the board —
Joy to the trumpets of Captain Sword !

His trumpets blow strength, his trumpets neigh,
They and his horse, and waft him away ;
They and his foot, with a tir'd proud flow,
Tatter'd escapers and givers of woe.
Open, ye cities ! Hats off ! hold breath !
To see the man who has been with Death ;
To see the man who determineth right
By the virtue-perplexing virtue of might.
Sudden before him have ceas'd the drums,
And lo ! in the air of empire he comes !

All things present, in earth and sky,
Seem to look at his looking eye.

III.

OF THE BALL THAT WAS GIVEN TO CAPTAIN SWORD.

BUT Captain Sword was a man among men,
And he hath become their playmate again :
Boot, nor sword, nor stern look hath he,
But holdeth the hand of a fair ladye,
And floweth the dance a palace within,
Half the night, to a golden din,
Midst lights in windows and love in eyes,
And a constant feeling of sweet surprise ;
And ever the look of Captain Sword
Is the look that's thank'd, and the look that's ador'd.

There was the country-dance, small of taste ;
And the waltz, that loveth the lady's waist ;
And the galopade, strange agreeable tramp,
Made of a scrape, a hobble, and stamp ;
And the high-stepping minuet, face to face,
Mutual worship of conscious grace ;
And all the shapes in which beauty goes
Weaving motion with blithe repose.

And then a table a feast displayed,
Like a garden of light without a shade,
All of gold, and flowers, and sweets,
With wines of old church-lands, and sylvan meats,
Food that maketh the blood feel choice ;
Yet all the face of the feast, and the voice,
And heart, still turn'd to the head of the board ;



THERE WAS THE COUNTRY DANCE, SMALL OF TASTE;
AND THE WALTZ, THAT LOVETH THE LADY'S WAIST.

Canto III. p. 14.



For ever the look of Captain Sword
Is the look that's thank'd, and the look that's ador'd.

Well content was Captain Sword ;
At his feet all wealth was pour'd ;
On his head all glory set ;
For his ease all comfort met ;
And around him seem'd entwain'd
All the arms of womankind.

And when he had taken his fill
Thus, of all that pampereth will,
In his down he sunk to rest,
Clasp'd in dreams of all its best.

IV.

ON WHAT TOOK PLACE ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE THE NIGHT AFTER THE VICTORY.

'Tis a wild night out of doors ;
The wind is mad upon the moors,
And comes into the rocking town,
Stabbing all things, up and down,
And then there is a weeping rain
Huddling 'gainst the window-pane,
And good men bless themselves in bed ;
The mother brings her infant's head
Closer, with a joy like tears,
And thinks of angels in her prayers ;
Then sleeps, with his small hand in hers.

Two loving women, lingering yet
Ere the fire is out, are met,
Talking sweetly, time-beguil'd,
One of her bridegroom, one her child,
The bridegroom he. They have receiv'd
Happy letters, more believ'd
For public news, and feel the bliss
The heavenlier on a night like this.
They think him hous'd, they think him blest,
Curtain'd in the core of rest,
Danger distant, all good near;
Why hath their "Good night" a tear?

Behold him! By a ditch he lies
Clutching the wet earth, his eyes
Beginning to be mad. In vain
His tongue still thirsts to lick the rain,

That mock'd but now his homeward tears;
And ever and anon he rears
His legs and knees with all their strength,
And then as strongly thrusts at length.
Rais'd, or stretch'd, he cannot bear
The wound that girds him, weltering there:
And "Water!" he cries, with moonward stare.

[“I will not read it!” with a start,
Burning cries some honest heart;
“I will not read it! Why endure
“Pangs which horror cannot cure?
“Why — Oh why? and rob the brave
“And the bereav'd of all they crave,
“A little hope to gild the grave?”

Ask'st thou why, thou honest heart?

'Tis *because* thou dost ask, and *because* thou dost start.

'Tis because thine own praise and fond outward thought
Have aided the shews which this sorrow have wrought.]

A wound unutterable — Oh God!

Mingles his being with the sod.

[“I'll read no more.” — Thou must, thou must:
In thine own pang doth wisdom trust.]

His nails are in earth, his eyes in air,

And “Water!” he crieth — he may not forbear.

Brave and good was he, yet now he dreams

The moon looks cruel; and he blasphemeth.

[“ No more ! no more !” Nay, this is but one ;
Were the whole tale told, it would not be done
From wonderful setting to rising sun.
But God’s good time is at hand—be calm,
Thou reader ! and steep thee in all thy balm
Of tears or patience, of thought or good will,
For the field—the field awaiteth us still.]

“ Water ! water !” all over the field :
To nothing but Death will that wound-voice yield.
One, as he crieth, is sitting half bent ;
What holds he so close ?—his body is rent.
Another is mouthless, with eyes on cheek ;
Unto the raven he may not speak.
One would fain kill him ; and one half round
The place where he writhes, hath up beaten the ground.
Like a mad horse hath he beaten the ground,

And the feathers and music that litter it round,
The gore, and the mud, and the golden sound.
Come hither, ye cities! ye ball-rooms, take breath!
See what a floor hath the dance of death!

The floor is alive, though the lights are out;
What are those dark shapes, flitting about?
Flitting about, yet no ravens they,
Not foes, yet not friends—mute creatures of prey;
Their prey is lucre, their claws a knife,
Some say they take the beseeching life.
Horrible pity is theirs for despair,
And they the love-sacred limbs leave bare.
Love will come to-morrow, and sadness,
Patient for the fear of madness,
And shut its eyes for cruelty,
So many pale beds to see.



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COME HITHER, YE CITIES! YE BALL-ROOMS TAKE BREATH!
SEE WHAT A FLOOR HATH THE DANCE OF DEATH.

Canto IV. p. 22.

Turn away, thou Love, and weep
No more in covering his last sleep ;
Thou hast him—blessed is thine eye !
Friendless Famine has yet to die.

A shriek !—Great God ! what superhuman
Peal was that ? Not man, nor woman,
Nor twenty madmen, crush'd, could wreak
Their soul in such a ponderous shriek.
Dumbly, for an instant, stares
The field ; and creep men's dying hairs.

O friend of man ! O noble creature !
Patient and brave, and mild by nature,
Mild by nature, and mute as mild,
Why brings he to these passes wild

Thee, gentle horse, thou shape of beauty ?
Could he not do his dreadful duty,
(If duty it be, which seems mad folly)
Nor link thee to his melancholy ?

Two noble steeds lay side by side,
One cropp'd the meek grass ere it died ;
Pang-struck it struck t' other, already torn,
And out of its bowels that shriek was born.

Now see what crawleth, well as it may,
Out of the ditch, and looketh that way.
What horror all black, in the sick moonlight,
Kneeling, half human, a burdensome sight ;
Loathly and liquid, as fly from a dish ;
Speak, Horror ! thou, for it withereth flesh.

“The grass caught fire; the wounded were by;
Writhing till eve did a remnant lie;
Then feebly this coal abateth his cry;
But he hopeth! he hopeth! joy lighteth his eye,
For gold he possesseth, and Murder is nigh!”

O goodness in horror! O ill not all ill!
In the worst of the worst may be fierce Hope still.
To-morrow with dawn will come many a wain,
And bear away loads of human pain,
Piles of pale beds for the 'spitals; but some
Again will awake in home-mornings, and some,
Dull herds of the war, again follow the drum.
From others, faint blood shall in families flow,
With wonder at life, and young oldness in woe,
Yet hence may the movers of great earth grow.
Now, even now, I hear them at hand,

Though again Captain Sword is up in the land,
Marching anew for more fields like these
In the health of his flag in the morning breeze.

Sneereth the trumpet, and stampeth the drum,
And again Captain Sword in his pride doth come ;
He passeth the fields where his friends lie lorn,
Feeding the flowers and the feeding corn,
Where under the sunshine cold they lie,
And he hasteth a tear from his old grey eye.
Small thinking is his but of work to be done,
And onward he marcheth, using the sun :
He slayeth, he wasteth, he spouteth his fires
On babes at the bosom, and bed-rid sires ;
He bursteth pale cities, through smoke and through
yell,
And bringeth behind him, hot-blooded, his hell.

Then the weak door is barr'd, and the soul all sore,
And hand-wringing helplessness paceth the floor,
And the lover is slain, and the parents are nigh —

Oh God! let me breathe, and look up at thy sky!
Good is as hundreds, evil as one;
Round about goeth the golden sun.

V.

HOW CAPTAIN SWORD, IN CONSEQUENCE OF HIS GREAT
VICTORIES, BECAME INFIRM IN HIS WITS.

BUT to win at the game, whose moves are death,
It maketh a man draw too proud a breath :
And to see his force taken for reason and right,
It tendeth to unsettle his reason quite.
Never did chief of the line of Sword
Keep his wits whole at that drunken board.
He taketh the size, and the roar, and fate,
Of the field of his action, for soul as great :
He smiteth and stunneth the cheek of mankind,
And saith “ Lo ! I rule both body and mind.”

Captain Sword forgot his own soul,
Which of aught save itself, resented controul;
Which whatever his deeds, ordained them still,
Bodiless monarch, enthron'd in his will:
He forgot the close thought, and the burning heart,
And pray'rs, and the mild moon hanging apart,
Which lifteth the seas with her gentle looks,
And growth, and death, and immortal books,
And the Infinite Mildness, the soul of souls,
Which layeth earth soft 'twixt her silver poles;
Which ruleth the stars, and saith not a word;
Whose speed in the hair of no comet is heard;
Which sendeth the soft sun, day by day,
Mighty, and genial, and just alway,
Owning no difference, doing no wrong,
Loving the orbs and the least bird's song,

The great, sweet, warm angel, with golden rod,
Bright with the smile of the distance of God.

Captain Sword, like a witless thing,
Of all under heaven must needs be king,
King of kings, and lord of lords,
Swayer of souls as well as of swords,
Ruler of speech, and through speech, of thought;
And hence to his brain was a madness brought.
He madden'd in East, he madden'd in West,
Fiercer for sights of men's unrest,
Fiercer for talk, amongst awful men,
Of their new mighty leader, Captain Pen,
A conqueror strange, who sat in his home
Like the wizard that plagued the ships of Rome,
Noiseless, show-less, dealing no death,
But victories, winged, went forth from his breath.

Three thousand miles across the waves*
Did Captain Sword cry, bidding souls be slaves:
Three thousand miles did the echo return
With a laugh and a blow made his old cheeks burn.

Then he call'd to a wrong-maddened people, and
swore †

Their name in the map should never be more:
Dire came the laugh, and smote worse than before.
Were earthquake a giant, up-thrusting his head
And o'erlooking the nations, not worse were the
dread.

Then, lo! was a wonder, and sadness to see;
For with that very people, their leader, stood he,

* The American War.

† The French War.

Incarnate afresh, like a Cæsar of old ;*
But because he look'd back, and his heart was cold,
Time, hope, and himself for a tale he sold.
Oh largest occasion, by man ever lost !
Oh throne of the world, to the war-dogs tost !

He vanish'd ; and thinly there stood in his place
The new shape of Sword, with an humbler face, †
Rebuking his brother, and preaching for right,
Yet aye when it came, standing proud on his might,
And squaring its claims with his old small sight ;
Then struck up his drums, with ensign furl'd,
And said, “ I will walk through a subject world :
Earth, just as it is, shall for ever endure,

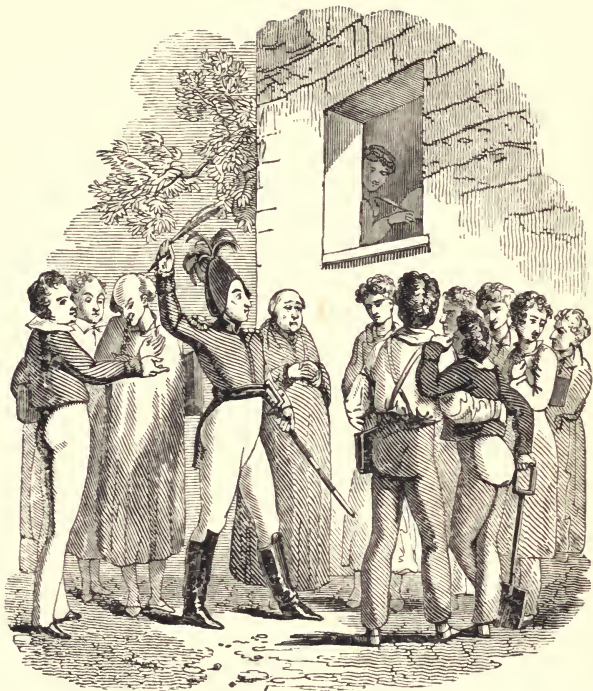
* Napoleon.

† The Duke of Wellington, or existing Military Toryism.

The rich be too rich, and the poor too poor;
And for this I'll stop knowledge. I'll say to it, 'Flow
Thus far; but presume no farther to flow:
For me, as I list, shall the free airs blow.'"

Laugh'd after him loudly that land so fair,*
"The king thou set'st over us, by a free air
Is swept away, senseless." And old Sword then
First knew the might of great Captain Pen.
So strangely it bow'd him, so wilder'd his brain,
That now he stood, hatless, renouncing his reign;
Now mutter'd of dust laid in blood; and now
'Twixt wonder and patience went lifting his brow.
Then suddenly came he, with gowned men,
And said, "Now observe me — *I'm* Captain Pen:

* The Glorious Three Days.



THEN SUDDENLY CAME HE WITH GOWNED MEN,
AND SAID, "NOW OBSERVE ME—I'M CAPTAIN PEN."

Canto V. p. 34.

*I'll lead all your changes—I'll write all your books—
I'm every thing—all things—I'm clergymen, cooks,
Clerks, carpenters, hosiers—I'm Pitt—I'm Lord Grey."*

'Twas painful to see his extravagant way;
But heart ne'er so bold, and hand ne'er so strong,
What are they, when truth and the wits go wrong?

VI.

OF CAPTAIN PEN, AND HOW HE FOUGHT WITH CAPTAIN SWORD.

Now tidings of Captain Sword and his state
Were brought to the ears of Pen the Great,
Who rose and said, “ His time is come.”
And he sent him, but not by sound of drum,
Nor trumpet, nor other hasty breath,
Hot with questions of life and death,
But only a letter calm and mild;
And Captain Sword he read it, and smil’d,

And said, half in scorn, and nothing in fear,
(Though his wits seem'd restor'd by a danger near,
For brave was he ever) "Let Captain Pen
Bring at his back a million men,
And I'll talk with his wisdom, and not till then."
Then replied to his messenger Captain Pen,
"I'll bring at my back a *world* of men."

Out laugh'd the captains of Captain Sword,
But their chief look'd vex'd, and said not a word,
For thought and trouble had touch'd his ears
Beyond the bullet-like sense of theirs,
And wherever he went, he was 'ware of a sound
Now heard in the distance, now gathering round,
Which irk'd him to know what the issue might be;
But the soul of the cause of it well guess'd he.

Indestructible souls among men
Were the souls of the line of Captain Pen;
Sages, patriots, martyrs mild,
Going to the stake, as child
Goeth with his prayer to bed;
Dungeon-beams, from quenchless head;
Poets, making earth aware
Of its wealth in good and fair;
And the benders to their intent,
Of metal and of element;
Of flame the enlightener, beauteous,
And steam, that bursteth his iron house;
And adamantine giants blind,
That, without master, have no mind.

Heir to these, and all their store,
Was Pen, the power unknown of yore;

And as their might still created might,
And each work'd for him by day and by night,
In wealth and wondrous means he grew,
Fit to move the earth anew ;
Till his fame began to speak
Pause, as when the thunders wake,
Muttering, in the beds of heaven :
Then, to set the globe more even,
Water he call'd, and Fire, and Haste,
Which hath left old Time displac'd —
And Iron, mightiest now for Pen,
Each of his steps like an army of men —
(Sword little knew what was leaving him then)
And out of the witchcraft of their skill,
A creature he call'd, to wait on his will —
Half iron, half vapour, a dread to behold —
Which evermore panted and evermore roll'd,

And uttered his words a million fold.
Forth sprang they in air, down raining like dew,
And men fed upon them, and mighty they grew.

Ears giddy with custom that sound might not hear,
But it woke up the rest, like an earthquake near;
And that same night of the letter, some strange
Compulsion of soul brought a sense of change;
And at midnight the sound grew into a roll
As the sound of all gath'rings from pole to pole,
From pole unto pole, and from clime to clime,
Like the roll of the wheels of the coming of time;—
A sound as of cities, and sound as of swords
Sharpening, and solemn and terrible words,
And laughter as solemn, and thunderous drumming,
A tread as if all the world were coming.

And then was a lull, and soft voices sweet
Call'd into music those terrible feet,
Which rising on wings, lo! the earth went round
To the burn of their speed with a golden sound;
With a golden sound, and a swift repose,
Such as the blood in the young heart knows;
Such as Love knows, when his tumults cease;
When all is quick, and yet all is at peace.

And when Captain Sword got up next morn,
Lo! a new-fac'd world was born;
For not an anger nor pride would it shew,
Nor aught of the loftiness now found low,
Nor would his own men strike a single blow:
Not a blow for their old, unconsidering lord
Would strike the good soldiers of Captain Sword;

But weaponless all, and wise they stood,
In the level dawn, and calm brotherly good ;
Yet bowed to him they, and kiss'd his hands,
For such were their new lord's commands,
Lessons rather, and brotherly plea ;
Reverence the past, quoth he ;
Reverence the struggle and mystery,
And faces human in their pain ;
Nor his the least, that could sustain
Cares of mighty wars, and guide
Calmly where the red deaths ride.

“ But how ! what now ? ” cried Captain Sword ;
“ Not a blow for your gen'ral ? not even a word ?
What ! traitors ? deserters ? ”

“ Ah no ! ” cried they ;

“ But the ‘ game’s ’ at an end ; the ‘ wise ’ wont play . ”

“ And where’s your old spirit ? ”

“ The same, though another ;

Man may be strong without maiming his brother . ”

“ But enemies ? ”

“ Enemies ! Whence should they come,

When all interchange what was known but to
some ? ”

“ But famine ? but plague ? worse evils by far . ”

“ O last mighty rhet’ric to charm us to war !



AND SO, LIKE THE TOOL OF A DISUS'D ART,
HE STOOD AT HIS WALL, AND RUSTED APART.

Canto VI. p. 44.



Look round—what has earth, now it equably speeds,
To do with these foul and calamitous needs?
Now it equably speeds, and thoughtfully glows,
And its heart is open, never to close?

“Still I can govern,” said Captain Sword;
“Fate I respect; and I stick to my word.”
And in truth so he did; but the word was one
He had sworn to all vanities under the sun,
To do, for their conq’rors, the least could be done.
Besides, what had *he* with his worn-out story,
To do with the cause he had wrong’d, and the glory?

No: Captain Sword a sword was still,
He could not unteach his lordly will;
He could not attemper his single thought;
It might not be bent, nor newly wrought:

And so, like the tool of a disus'd art,
He stood at his wall, and rusted apart.

'Twas only for many-soul'd Captain Pen
To make a world of swordless men.

POSTSCRIPT;

CONTAINING SOME REMARKS

ON WAR AND MILITARY STATESMEN.

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CONTAINING SOME REMARKS

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THE object of this poem is to show the horrors of war, the false ideas of power produced in the minds of its leaders, and, by inference, the unfitness of those leaders for the government of the world.

The author intends no more offence to any one than can be helped: he feels due admiration for that courage and energy, the supposed

misdirection of which it deplures; he heartily acknowledges the probability, that that supposed misdirection has been hitherto no misdirection, but a necessity—but he believes that the time is come when, by encouraging the disposition to question it, its services and its sufferings may be no longer required, and he would fain tear asunder the veil from the sore places of war,—would show what has been hitherto kept concealed, or not shown earnestly, and for the purpose,—would prove, at all events, that the time has come for putting an end to those phrases in the narratives of warfare, by which a suspicious delicacy is palmed upon the reader, who is told, after everything has been done to excite his admiration of war, that his feelings are “spared” a recital of its miseries — that “a veil” is drawn over them—a “truce” given to descriptions which only “harrow up the soul,” &c.

Suppose it be necessary to "harrow up the soul," in order that the soul be no longer harrowed? Moralists and preachers do not deal after this tender fashion with moral, or even physical consequences, resulting from other evils. Why should they spare these? Why refuse to look their own effeminacy in the face,—their own gaudy and overweening encouragement of what they dare not contemplate in its results? Is a murder in the streets worth attending to,—a single wounded man worth carrying to the hospital,—and are all the murders, and massacres, and fields of wounded, and the madness, the conflagrations, the famines, the miseries of families, and the rickety frames and melancholy bloods of posterity, only fit to have an embroidered handkerchief thrown over them? Must "ladies and gentlemen" be called off, that they may not "look that way," the "sight is so shocking"? Does it become

us to let others endure, what we cannot bear even to think of?

Even if nothing else were to come of inquiries into the horrors of war, surely they would cry aloud for some better provision against their extremity *after* battle,—for some regulated and certain assistance to the wounded and agonized,—so that we might hear no longer of men left in cold and misery all night, writhing with torture,—of bodies stripped by prowlers, perhaps murderers,—and of frenzied men, the other day the darlings of their friends, dying, two and even several days after the battle, of famine! The field of Waterloo was not completely cleared of its dead and dying till nearly a week! Surely large companies of men should be organized for the sole purpose of assisting and clearing away the field after battle. They should be steady men,

not lightly admitted, nor unpossessed of some knowledge of surgery, and they should be attached to the surgeon's staff. Both sides would respect them for their office, and keep them sacred from violence. Their duties would be too painful and useful to get them disrespected for not joining in the fight—and possibly, before long, they would help to do away their own necessity, by detailing what they beheld. Is that the reason why there is no such establishment? The question is asked, not in bitterness, but to suggest a self-interrogation to the instincts of war.

I have not thought proper to put notes to the poem, detailing the horrors which I have touched upon; nor even to quote my authorities, which are unfortunately too numerous, and contain worse horrors still. They are furnished by almost every history of a campaign, in all quarters of the world. Circumstances so painful, in a first attempt to

render them public for their own sakes, would, I thought, even meet with less attention in prose than in verse, however less fitted they may appear for it at first sight. Verse, if it has any enthusiasm, at once demands and conciliates attention; it proposes to say much in little; and it associates with it the idea of something consolatory, or otherwise sustaining. But there is one prose specimen of these details, which I will give, because it made so great an impression on me in my youth, that I never afterwards could help calling it to mind when war was spoken of; and as I had a good deal to say on that subject, having been a public journalist during one of the most interesting periods of modern history, and never having been blinded into an admiration of war by the dazzle of victory, the circumstance may help to show how salutary a record of this kind may be, and what an impression the subject might be brought to make on

society. The passage is in a note to one of Mr Southey's poems, the "Ode to Horror," and is introduced by another frightful record, less horrible, because there is not such agony implied in it, nor is it alive.

"I extract" (says Mr Southey) "the following picture of consummate horror from notes to a poem written in twelve-syllable verse, upon the campaign of 1794 and 1795: it was during the retreat to Deventer. 'We could not proceed a hundred yards without perceiving the dead bodies of men, women, children, and horses, in every direction. One scene made an impression upon my memory which time will never be able to efface. Near another cart we perceived a stout-looking man and a beautiful young woman, with an infant, about seven months old, at the breast, all three frozen and dead. The mother had most

certainly expired in the act of suckling her child ; as with one breast exposed she lay upon the drifted snow, the milk to all appearance in a stream drawn from the nipple by the babe, and instantly congealed. The infant seemed as if its lips had but just then been disengaged, and it reposed its little head upon the mother's bosom, with an overflow of milk, frozen as it trickled from the mouth. Their countenances were perfectly composed and fresh, resembling those of persons in a sound and tranquil slumber.'”

“ The following description (he continues) of a field of battle is in the words of one who passed over the field of Jemappe, after Doumourier's victory : ‘ It was on the third day after the victory obtained by general Doumourier over the Austrians, that I rode across the field of battle. The scene lies on a waste common, rendered then more dreary

by the desertion of the miserable hovels before occupied by peasants. Everything that resembled a human habitation was desolated, and for the most part they had been burnt or pulled down, to prevent their affording shelter to the posts of the contending armies. The ground was ploughed up by the wheels of the artillery and waggons; everything like herbage was trodden into mire; broken carriages, arms, accoutrements, dead horses and men, were strewed over the heath. *This was the third day after the battle: it was the beginning of November, and for three days a bleak wind and heavy rain had continued incessantly.* There were still remaining alive several hundreds of horses, and of the human victims of that dreadful fight. I can speak with certainty of having seen more than four hundred men *still living*, unsheltered, *without food*, and without any human assistance, most of them confined to the spot where they had fallen *by broken limbs*. The two

armies had proceeded, and abandoned these miserable wretches to their fate. *Some of the dead persons appeared to have expired in the act of embracing each other.* Two young French officers, who were brothers, had crawled under the side of a dead horse, where they had contrived a kind of shelter by means of a cloak: they were both mortally wounded, and groaning *for each other.* One very fine young man had just strength enough to drag himself out of a hollow partly filled with water, and was laid upon a little hillock groaning with agony; A GRAPE-SHOT HAD CUT ACROSS THE UPPER PART OF HIS BELLY, AND HE WAS KEEPING IN HIS BOWELS WITH A HANDKERCHIEF AND HAT. He begged of me to end his misery! He complained of dreadful thirst. I filled him the hat of a dead soldier with water, which he nearly drank off at once, and left him to that end of his wretchedness which could not be far distant.' ”

“ I hope (concludes Mr Southey), I have always felt and expressed an honest and Christian abhorrence of wars, and of the systems that produce them; but my ideas of their immediate horrors fell infinitely short of this authentic picture.”

Mr Southey, in his subsequent lives of conquerors, and his other writings, will hardly be thought to have acted up to this “abhorrence of wars, and of the systems that produce them.” Nor is he to be blamed for qualifying his view of the subject, equally blameless (surely) as they are to be held who have retained their old views, especially by him who helped to impress them. His friend Mr Wordsworth, in the vivacity of his admonitions to hasty complaints of evil, has gone so far as to say that “Carnage is God’s daughter,” and thereby subjected himself to the

scoffs of a late noble wit. He is addressing the Deity himself:—

“ But thy most dreaded instrument,
In working out a pure intent,
Is man, array'd for mutual slaughter :
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter.”

Mr Wordsworth is a great poet and a philosophical thinker, in spite of his having here paid a tremendous compliment to a rhyme (for unquestionably the word “slaughter” provoked him into that imperative “Yea,” and its subsequent venturous affiliation) ; but the judgment, to say no more of it, is rash. Whatever the Divine Being intends, by his permission or use of evil, it becomes us to think the best of it ; but not to affirm the appropriation of the particulars to him under their worst appellation, seeing that he has implanted in us a horror of them, and a wish to do them away. What it is right in him to do, is one thing ;

what it is proper in us to affirm that he actually does, is another. And, above all, it is idle to affirm what he intends to do for ever, and to have us eternally venerate and abstain from questioning an evil. All good and evil, and vice and virtue themselves, might become confounded in the human mind by a like daring; and humanity sit down under every buffet of misfortune, without attempting to resist it: which, fortunately, is impossible. Plato cut this knotty point better, by regarding evil as a thing senseless and unmalignant (indeed no philosopher regards anything as malignant, or malignant for malignity's sake); out of which, or notwithstanding it, good is worked, and to be worked, perhaps, finally to the abolition of evil. But whether this consummation be possible or not, and even if the dark horrors of evil be necessary towards the enjoyment of the light of good, still the horror must be maintained, where the object is really horrible; otherwise, we but the more idly

resist the contrast, if necessary—and, what is worse, endanger the chance of melioration, if possible.

Did war appear to me an inevitable evil, I should be one of the last men to shew it in any other than its holiday clothes. I can appeal to writings before the public, to testify whether I am in the habit of making the worst of anything, or of not making it yield its utmost amount of good. My inclinations, as well as my reason, lie all that way. I am a passionate and grateful lover of all the beauties of the universe, moral and material; and the chief business of my life is to endeavour to give others the like fortunate affection. But, on the same principle, I feel it my duty to look evil in the face, in order to discover if it be capable of amendment; and I do not see why the miseries of war are to be spared this interrogation, simply because they are frightful and enormous. Men

get rid of smaller evils which lie in their way—nay, of great ones ; and there appears to be no reason why they should not get rid of the greatest, if they will but have the courage. We have abolished inquisitions and the rack, burnings for religion, burnings for witchcraft, hangings for forgery (a great triumph in a commercial country), much of the punishment of death in some countries, all of it in others. Why not abolish war ? Mr Wordsworth writes no odes to tell us that the Inquisition was God's daughter ; though Lope de Vega, who was one of its officers, might have done so—and Mr Wordsworth too, had he lived under its dispensation. Lope de Vega, like Mr Wordsworth and Mr Southey, was a good man, as well as a celebrated poet : and we will concede to his memory what the English poets will, perhaps, not be equally disposed to grant (for they are severe on the Romish faith) that even the Inquisition, *like War*, might possibly have had some utility in its evil, were it

no other than a hastening of Christianity by its startling contradictions of it. Yet it has gone. The Inquisition, as War may be hereafter, is no more. Daughter if it was of the Supreme Good, it was no immortal daughter. Why should "Carnage" be,—especially as God has put it in our heads to get rid of it?

I am aware of what may be said on these occasions, to "puzzle the will;" and I concede of course, that mankind may entertain false views of their power to change anything for the better. I concede, that all change may be only in appearance, and not make any real difference in the general amount of good and evil; that evil, to a certain invariable amount, may be necessary to the amount of good (the overbalance of which, with a most hearty and loving sincerity, I ever acknowledge); and finally, that all which the wisest of men could utter on any such subject, might possibly be

nothing but a jargon,—the witless and puny voice of what we take to be a mighty orb, but which, after all, is only a particle in the starry dust of the universe.

On the other hand, all this may be something very different from what we take it to be, setting aside even the opinions which consider mind as everything, and time and space themselves as only modifications of it, or breathing-room in which it exists, weaving the thoughts which it calls life, death, and materiality.

But be his metaphysical opinions what they may, who but some fantastic individual, or ultra-contemplative scholar, ever thinks of subjecting to them his practical notions of bettering his condition! And how soon is it likely that men will leave off endeavouring to secure themselves against the uneasier chances of vicissitude, even if

Providence ordains them to do so for no other end than the preservation of vicissitude itself, and not in order to help them out of the husks and thorns of action into the flowers of it, and into the air of heaven? Certain it is, at all events, that the human being is incited to increase his amount of good: and that when he is endeavouring to do so, he is at least not fulfilling the worst part of his necessity. Nobody tells us, when we attempt to put out a fire and to save the lives of our neighbours, that Conflagration is God's daughter, or Murder God's daughter. On the contrary, these are things which Christendom is taught to think ill off, and to wish to put down; and therefore we should put down war, which is murder and conflagration by millions.

To those who tell us that nations would grow cowardly and effeminate without war, we answer,

“ Try a reasonable condition of peace first, and then prove it. Try a state of things which mankind have never yet attained, because they had no press, and no universal comparison of notes ; and consider, in the meanwhile, whether so cheerful, and intelligent, and just a state, seeing fair play between body and mind, and educated into habits of activity, would be likely to uneducate itself into what was neither respected nor customary. Prove, in the meanwhile, that nations are cowardly and effeminate, that have been long unaccustomed to war ; that the South Americans are so ; or that all our robust countrymen, who do not “ go for soldiers,” are timid agriculturists and manufacturers, with not a quoit to throw on the green, or a saucy word to give to an insult. Moral courage is in self-respect and the sense of duty ; physical courage is a matter of health or organization. Are these predispositions likely to fail in a community of instructed freemen ?

Doubters of advancement are always arguing from a limited past to an unlimited future; that is to say, from a past of which they know but a point, to a future of which they know nothing. They stand on the bridge "between two eternities," seeing a little bit of it behind them, and nothing at all of what is before; and uttering those words unfit for mortal tongue, "man ever was" and "man ever will be." They might as well say what is beyond the stars. It appears to be a part of the necessity of things, from what we see of the improvements they make, that all human improvement should proceed by the co-operation of human means. But what blinker into the night of next week,—what luckless prophet of the impossibilities of steam-boats and steam-carriages,—shall presume to say how far those improvements are to extend? Let no man faint in the co-operation with which God has honoured him.

As to those superabundances of population which wars and other evils are supposed to be necessary in order to keep down, there are questions which have a right to be put, long before any such necessity is assumed: and till those questions be answered, and the experiments dependent upon them tried, the interrogators have a right to assume that no such necessity exists. I do not enter upon them—for I am not bound to do so; but I have touched upon them in the poem; and the “too rich,” and other disingenuous half-reasoners, know well what they are. All passionate remedies for evil are themselves evil, and tend to re-produce what they remedy. It is high time for the world to show that it has come to man’s estate, and can put down what is wrong without violence. Should the wrong still return, we should have a right to say with the Apostle, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof;” for meanwhile we should “not have done evil that

good may come." That "good" may come! nay, that evil may be perpetuated; for what good, superior to the alternatives denounced, is achieved by this eternal round of war and its causes? Let us do good in a good and kind manner, and trust to the co-operation of Providence for the result. It seems the only real way of attaining to the very best of which our earth is capable; and at the very worst, necessity, like the waters, will find its level, and the equity of things be justified.

I firmly believe, that war, or the sending thousands of our fellow-creatures to cut one another to bits, often for what they have no concern in, nor understand, will one day be reckoned far more absurd than if people were to settle an argument over the dinner-table with their knives, — a logic indeed, which was once fashionable in some places during the "good old times." The

world has seen the absurdity of that practice: why should it not come to years of discretion, with respect to violence on a larger scale? The other day, our own country and the United States agreed to refer a point in dispute to the arbitration of the king of Holland; a compliment (if we are to believe the newspapers) of which his majesty was justly proud. He struck a medal on the strength of it, which history will show as a set-off against his less creditable attempts to force his opinions upon the Belgians. Why should not every national dispute be referred, in like manner, to a third party? There is reason to suppose, that the judgment would stand a good chance of being impartial; and it would benefit the character of the judge, and dispose him to receive judgments of the same kind; till at length the custom would prevail, like any other custom; and men be astonished at the customs that preceded it. In private life, none but school-boys

and the vulgar settle disputes by blows; even duelling is losing its dignity.

Two nations, or most likely two governments, have a dispute; they reason the point backwards and forwards; they cannot determine it; perhaps they do not wish to determine; so, like two carmen in the street, they fight it out; first, however, dressing themselves up to look fine, and pluming themselves on their absurdity; just as if the two carmen were to go and put on their Sunday clothes, and stick a feather in their hat besides, in order to be as dignified and fantastic as possible. They then "go at it," and cover themselves with mud, blood, and glory. Can anything be more ridiculous? Yet, apart from the habit of thinking otherwise, and being drummed into the notion by the very toys of infancy, the similitude is not one atom too ludicrous; no, nor a thousandth part enough so. I am aware that a sarcasm is but a

sarcasm, and need not imply any argument ; never includes all ;—but it acquires a more respectable character when so much is done to keep it out of sight,—when so many questions are begged against it by “ pride, pomp, and circumstance,” and allegations of necessity. Similar allegations may be, and are brought forward, by other nations of the world, in behalf of customs which we, for our parts, think very ridiculous, and do our utmost to put down ; never referring them, as we refer our own, to the mysterious ordinations of Providence ; or, if we do, never hesitating to suppose, that Providence, in moving us to interfere, is varying its ordinations. Now, all that I would ask of the advocates of war, is to apply the possible justice of this supposition to their own case, for the purpose of thoroughly investigating the question.

But they will exultingly say, perhaps, “ Is this a time for investigating the question, when mili-

tary genius, even for civil purposes, has regained its ascendancy in the person of the Duke of Wellington? When the world has shown that it cannot do without him? When whigs, radicals, liberals of all sorts, have proved to be but idle talkers, in comparison with this man of few words and many deeds?" I answer, that it remains to be proved whether the ascendancy be gained or not; that I have no belief it will be regained; and that, in the meanwhile, never was time fitter for questioning the merits of war, and, by inference, those of its leaders. The general peacefulness of the world presents a fair opportunity for laying the foundations of peaceful opinion; and the alarm of the moment renders the interrogation desirable for its immediate sake.

The re-appearance of a military administration, or of an administration *barely civil*, and military at heart, may not, at first sight, be thought the most

promising one for hastening a just appreciation of war, and the ascendancy of moral over physical strength. But is it, or can it be, lasting? Will it not provoke—is it not now provoking—a re-action still more peremptory against the claims of Toryism, than the state of things which preceded it? Is it anything but a flash of success, still more indicative of expiring life, and caused only by its convulsive efforts?

If it be, this it is easy enough to predict, that Sir Robert Peel, notwithstanding his abilities, and the better ambition which is natural to them, and which struggles in him with an inferior one, impatient of his origin, will turn out to be nothing but a servant of the aristocracy, and (more or less openly) of a barrack-master. He will be the servant, not of the King, not of the House of Commons, but of the House of Lords, and (as long as such influence lasts, which can be but a

short while), of its military leader. He will do nothing whatsoever contrary to their dictation, upon peril of being treated worse than Canning; and all the reform which he is permitted to bring about will be only just as much as will serve to keep off the spirit of it as long as possible, and to continue the people in that state of comparative ignorance, which is the only safeguard of monopoly. Every unwilling step of reform will be accompanied with some retrograde or bye effort in favour of the abuses reformed: cunning occasion will be seized to convert boons, demanded by the age, into gifts of party favour, and bribes for the toleration of what is withheld; and as knowledge proceeds to extort public education (for extort it it will, and in its own way too at last), mark, and see what attempts will be made to turn knowledge against itself, and to catechise the nation back into the school-boy acquiescence of the good people of Germany.

Much good is there in that people—I would not be thought to undervalue it—much *bonhommie*—and in the most despotic districts, as much sensual comfort as can make any people happy who know no other happiness. But England and France, the leaders of Europe, the peregrinators of the world, cannot be confined to those lazy and prospectless paths. They have gone through the feudal reign; they must now go through the commercial (God forbid that for any body's sake they should stop there!), and they will continue to advance, till all are instructed, and all are masters; and government, in however gorgeous a shape, be truly their servant. The problem of existing governments is how to prepare for this inevitable period, and to continue to be its masters, by converting themselves frankly and truly into its friends. For my part, as one of the people, I confess I like the colours and shows of feudalism, and would retain as much of them as would adorn

nobler things. I would keep the tiger's skin, though the beast be killed; the painted window, though the superstition be laid in the tomb. Nature likes external beauty, and man likes it. It softens the heart, enriches the imagination, and helps to show us that there are other goods in the world besides bare utility. I would fain see the splendours of royalty combined with the cheapness of a republic and the equal knowledge of all classes. Is such a combination impossible? I would exhort the lovers of feudal splendour to be the last men to think so; for a thousand times more impossible will they find its retention under any other circumstances. Their royalties, their educations, their accomplishments of all sorts, must go along with the Press and its irresistible consequences, or they will be set aside like a child in a corner, who has insisted on keeping the toys and books of his brothers to himself.

Now, there is nothing that irritates a just cause so much as a threatening of force; and all impositions of a military chief on a state, where civil directors will, at least, do as well, is a threatening of force, disguise it, or pretend to laugh at it, as its imposers may. This irritation in England will not produce violence. Public opinion is too strong, and the future too secure. But deeply and daily will increase the disgust and the ridicule; and individuals will get laughed at and catechised who cannot easily be sent out of the way as ambassadors, and who might as well preserve their self-respect a little better. To attempt, however quietly, to overawe the advance of improvement, by the aspect of physical force, is as idle as if soldiers were drawn out to suppress the rising of a flood. The flood rises quietly, irresistibly, without violence—it cannot help it—the waters of knowledge are out, and will “cover the earth.” Of what use is it to see the representative of

a by-gone influence—a poor individual mortal (for he is nothing else in the comparison), fretting and fuming on the shore of this mighty sea, and playing the part of a Canute reversed,—an antic really taking his flatterers at their word?

The first thirty-five years of the nineteenth century have been rich in experiences of the sure and certain failure of all soldiership and Toryism to go heartily along in the cause of the many. There has been the sovereign instance of Napoleon Bonaparte himself—of the allies after him—of Charles the Tenth—of Louis Philippe, albeit a “schoolmaster,”—and lastly, of this strange and most involuntary Reformer the Duke of Wellington, who refused to do, under Canning, or for principle’s sake, what he consented to do when Canning died, for the sake of regaining power, and of keeping it with as few concessions as possible. Canning perished because

Toryism, or the principle of power for its own sake, to which he had been a servant, could not bear to acknowledge him as its master. His intellect was just great enough (as his birth was small enough) to render it jealous of him under that aspect. There is an instinct in Toryism which renders pure intellect intolerable to it, except in some inferior or mechanical shape, or in the flattery of voluntary servitude. But, by a like instinct, it is not so jealous of military renown. It is glad of the doubtful amount of intellect in military genius, and knows it to be a good ally in the preservation of power, and in the substitution of noise and show for qualities fearless of inspection. Is it an ascendancy of this kind which the present age requires, or will permit? Do we want a soldier at the head of us, when there is nobody abroad to fight with? when international as well as national questions can manifestly settle themselves without him?

and when his appearance in the seat of power can indicate nothing but a hankering after those old substitutions of force for argument, or at best of “an authority for a reason,” which every step of reform is hoping to do away? Do we want him to serve in our shops? to preside over our studies? to cultivate “peace and good will” among nations? wounding no self love—threatening no social?

There never was a soldier, purely brought up as such—and it is of such only I speak, and not of rare and even then perilous exceptions,—men educated in philosophy like Epaminondas, or in homely household virtues and citizenship like Washington—but there never was a soldier such as I speak of, who did more for the world than was compatible with his confined and arbitrary breeding. I do not speak, of course, with reference to the unprofessional part of his cha-

acter. Circumstances, especially the participation of dangers and vicissitude, often conspire with naturally good qualities to render soldiers the most amiable of men; and nothing is more delightful to contemplate than an old military veteran, whose tenderness of heart has survived the shocks of the rough work it has been tried in, till twenty miserable sights of war and horror start up to the imagination as a set-off against its attractiveness. But, publicly speaking, the more a soldier succeeds, the more he looks upon soldiership as something superior to all other kinds of ascendancy, and qualified to dispense with them. He always ends in considering the flower of the art of government as consisting in issuing "orders," and that of popular duty as comprised in "obedience." Cities with him are barracks, and the nation a conquered country. He is at best but a pioneer of civilization. When he undertakes to be the civilizer himself, he makes

mistakes that betray him to others, even supposing him self-deceived. Napoleon, though he was the accidental instrument of a popular re-action, was one of the educated tools of the system that provoked it,—an officer brought up at a Royal Military College; and in spite of his boasted legislation and his real genius, such he ever remained. He did as much for his own aggrandizement as he could, and no more for the world than he thought compatible with it. The same military genius which made him as great as he was, stopped him short of a greater greatness; because, quick and imposing as he was in acting the part of a civil ruler, he was in reality a soldier and nothing else, and by the excess of the soldier's propensity (aggrandizement by force), he overtopped himself, and fell to pieces. Soldiership appears to have narrowed or hardened the public spirit of every man who has spent the chief part of his life in it, who has died at an age which gives

final proofs of its tendency, and whose history is thoroughly known. We all know what Cromwell did to an honest parliament. Marlborough ended in being a miser and the tool of his wife. Even good-natured, heroic Nelson condescended to become an executioner at Naples. Frederick did much for Prussia, as a power; but what became of her as a people, or power either, before the popular power of France? Even Washington seemed not to comprehend those who thought that negro-slaves ought to be freed.

In the name of common sense then, what do we want with a soldier who was born and bred in circumstances the most arbitrary; who never advocated a liberal measure as long as he could help it; and who (without meaning to speak presumptuously, or in one's own person unauthorized by opinion) is one of the merest soldiers, though a great one, that ever existed,—

without genius of any other sort,—with scarcely a civil public quality either commanding or engaging (as far as the world in general can see),—and with no more to say for himself than the most mechanical clerk in office? In what respect is the Duke of Wellington better fitted to be a parliamentary leader, than the Sir Arthur Wellesley of twenty years back? Or what has re-cast the habits and character of the Colonel Wellesley of the East Indies, to give him an unprofessional consideration for the lives and liberties of his fellow-creatures?

And yet the Duke of Wellington (it is said) *may*, after all, be in earnest in his professions of reform and advancement. If so, he will be the most remarkable instance that ever existed, of the triumph of reason over the habits of a life, and the experience of mankind. I have looked for some such man through a very re-

markable period of the world, when an honest declaration to this effect would have set him at the top of mankind, to be worshipped for ever; and I never found the glorious opportunity seized, — not by Napoleon when he came from Elba, — not by the allies when they conquered him, — not by Louis Philippe, though he was educated in adversity. I mean that he has shown himself a prince born, of the most aristocratic kind; and evidently considers himself as nothing but the head of a new dynasty. When the Duke of Wellington had the opportunity of being a reformer, of his own free will, he resisted it as long as he could. He opposed reform up to the last moment of its freedom from his dictation; he declared that ruin would follow it; that the institutions of the country were perfect without it; and that, at the very least, the less of it the better. And for this enmity, even if no other reason existed,—even

if his new light were sincere,—the Duke of Wellington ought not to have the *honour* of leading reform. It is just as if a man had been doing all he could to prevent another from entering his own house, and then, when he found that the by-standers would insist on his having free passage, were to turn to them, smiling, and say, “Well, since it must be so, allow me to do the honours of the mansion.” Everybody knows what this proposal would be called by the by-standers. And if the way in which greatness is brought up and spoilt gives it a right to a less homely style of rebuke (as I grant it does), still the absurdity of the Duke’s claim is not the less evident, nor the air of it less provoking.

I can imagine but two reasons for the remotest possible permission of this glaring anomaly—this government of anti-reforming reformers—this hospital of sick guides for the healthy, supported

by involuntary contributions: first, sheer necessity (which is ludicrous); and second, a facilitation of church reform through the Lords and the bench of Bishops; the desirableness of which facilitation appears to be in no proportion to the compromise it is likely to make with abuses. I have read, I believe, all the utmost possible things that can be said in its favour, the articles, for instance, written by the *Times* newspaper (admirable, as far as a rotten cause can let them be, and when not afflicted by some portentous mystery of personal resentment); and though I trust I may lay claim to as much willingness to be convinced, as most men who have suffered and reflected, I have not seen a single argument which did not appear to me fully answered by the above objection alone (about the "honour"); setting aside the innumerable convincing ones urged by reasoners on the other side: for as to any dearth of statesmen in a country like

this, it never existed, nor ever can, till education and public spirit have entirely left it. There have been the same complaints at every change in the history of administrations; and the crop has never failed.

Allow me to state here, that any appearance of personality in this book is involuntary. Public principles are sometimes incarnate in individual shapes; and, in attacking them, the individual may be seemingly attacked, where, to eyes which look a little closer, there is evidently no such intention. I have been obliged to identify, in some measure, the Power of the Sword with several successive individuals, and with the Duke of Wellington most, because he is the reigning shape, and includes all its pretensions. But as an individual who am nothing, except in connexion with what I humanly feel, I dare to affirm, that I have not only the consideration that becomes

me for all human beings, but a flesh and blood regard for every body; and that I as truly respect in the Noble Duke the possession of military science, of a straight-forward sincerity, and a valour of which no circumstances or years can diminish the ready firmness, as I doubt the fitness of a man of his education, habits, and political principles, for the guidance of an intellectual age.

I dislike Toryism, because I think it an unjust, exacting, and pernicious thing, which tends to keep the interests of the many in perpetual subjection to those of the few; but far be it from me, in common modesty, to dislike those who have been brought up in its principles, and taught to think them good,—far less such of them as adorn it by intellectual or moral qualities, and who justly claim for it, under its best aspect in private life, that ease and urbanity of behaviour which

implies an acknowledgment of its claims to respect, even where those claims are partly grounded in prejudice. I heartily grant to the privileged classes, that, enjoying in many respects the best educations, they have been conservators of polished manners, and of the other graces of intercourse. My quarrel with them is, that the inferior part of their education induces them to wish to keep these manners and graces to themselves, together with a superabundance, good for nobody, of all other advantages; and that thus, instead of being the preservers of a beautiful and genial flame, good for all, and in due season partakeable by all, they would hoard and make an idolatrous treasure of it, sacred to one class alone, and such as the diffusion of knowledge renders it alike useless and exasperating to endeavour to withhold.

I will conclude this Postscript with quotations from three writers of the present day, who may

be fairly taken to represent the three distinct classes of the leaders of knowledge, and who will show what is thought of the feasibility of putting an end to war,—the Utilitarian, or those who are all for the tangible and material—the Metaphysical, or those who recognize, in addition, the spiritual and imaginative wants of mankind—and lastly (in no offensive sense), the Men of the World, whose opinion will have the greatest weight of all with the incredulous, and whose speaker is a soldier to boot, and a man who evidently sees fair play to all the weaknesses as well as strengths of our nature.

The first quotation is from the venerable Mr Bentham, a man who certainly lost sight of no existing or possible phase of society, such as the ordinary disputants on this subject contemplate. I venture to think him not thoroughly philosophical on the point, especially in what he says in

reproach of men educated to think differently from himself. But the passage will show the growth of opinion in a practical and highly influential quarter.

“Nothing can be worse,” says Mr Bentham, “than the general feeling on the subject of war. The Church, the State, the ruling few, the subject many, all seem to have combined, in order to patronise vice and crime in their very widest sphere of evil. Dress a man in particular garments, call him by a particular name, and he shall have authority, on divers occasions, to commit every species of offence, to pillage, to murder, to destroy human felicity, and, for so doing, he shall be rewarded.

“Of all that is pernicious in admiration, the admiration of heroes is the most pernicious; and how delusion should have made us admire what

virtue should teach us to hate and loathe, is among the saddest evidences of human weakness and folly. The crimes of heroes seem lost in the vastness of the field they occupy. A lively idea of the mischief they do, of the misery they create, seldom penetrates the mind through the delusions with which thoughtlessness and falsehood have surrounded their names and deeds. Is it that the magnitude of the evil is too gigantic for entrance? We read of twenty thousand men killed in a battle, with no other feeling than that 'it was a glorious victory.' Twenty thousand, or ten thousand, what reckon we of their sufferings? The hosts who perished are evidence of the completeness of the triumph; and the completeness of the triumph is the measure of merit, and the glory of the conqueror. Our schoolmasters, and the immoral books they so often put into our hands, have inspired us with an affection for heroes; and the hero is more heroic in proportion

to the numbers of the slain—add a cypher, not one iota is added to our disapprobation. Four or two figures give us no more sentiment of pain than one figure, while they add marvellously to the grandeur and splendour of the victor. Let us draw forth one individual from those thousands, or tens of thousands,—his leg has been shivered by one ball, his jaw broken by another—he is bathed in his own blood, and that of his fellows—yet he lives, tortured by thirst, fainting, famishing. He is but one of the twenty thousand—one of the actors and sufferers in the scene of the hero's glory—and of the twenty thousand there is scarcely one whose suffering or death will not be the centre of a circle of misery. Look again, admirers of that hero! Is not this wretchedness? Because it is repeated ten, ten hundred, ten thousand times, is not this wretchedness?

“The period will assuredly arrive, when better

instructed generations will require all the evidence of history to credit, that, in times deeming themselves enlightened, human beings should have been honoured with public approval, in the very proportion of the misery they caused, and the mischiefs they perpetrated. They will call upon all the testimony which incredulity can require, to persuade them that, in passed ages, men there were—men, too, deemed worthy of popular recompense—who, for some small pecuniary retribution, hired themselves out to do any deeds of pillage, devastation, and murder, which might be demanded of them. And, still more will it shock their sensibilities to learn, that such men, such men-destroyers, were marked out as the eminent and the illustrious—as the worthy of laurels and monuments—of eloquence and poetry. In that better and happier epoch, the wise and the good will be busied in hurling into oblivion, or dragging forth for exposure to universal ignominy and ob-

loquy, many of the heads we deem *heroic*; while the true fame and the perdurable glories will be gathered around the creators and diffusers of happiness.”—*Deontology*.

Our second quotation is from one of the subtlest and most universal thinkers now living—Thomas Carlyle — chiefly known to the public as a German scholar and the friend of Goethe, but deeply respected by other leading intellects of the day, as a man who sees into the utmost recognized possibilities of knowledge. See what he thinks of war, and of the possibility of putting an end to it. We forget whether we got the extract from the *Edinburgh* or the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, having made it sometime back and mislaid the reference; and we take a liberty with him in mentioning his name as the writer, for which his zeal in the cause of mankind will assuredly pardon us.

“The better minds of all countries,” observes Mr Carlyle, “begin to understand each other, and, which follows naturally, to love each other and help each other, by whom ultimately all countries in all their proceedings are governed.

“Late in man’s history, yet clearly, at length, it becomes manifest to the dullest, that mind is stronger than matter—that mind is the creator and shaper of matter—that not brute force, but only persuasion and faith, is the King of this world. The true poet, who is but an inspired thinker, is still an Orpheus whose lyre tames the savage beasts, and evokes the dead rocks to fashion themselves into palaces and stately inhabited cities. It has been said, and may be repeated, that literature is fast becoming all in all to us—our Church, our Senate, our whole social constitution. The true Pope of Christendom is not that feeble old man in Rome, nor is

its autocrat the Napoleon, the Nicholas, with its half million even of obedient bayonets; such autocrat is himself but a more cunningly-devised bayonet and military engine in the hands of a mightier than he. The true autocrat, or Pope, is that man, the real or seeming wisest of the last age; crowned after death; who finds his hierarchy of gifted authors, his clergy of assiduous journalists: whose decretals, written, not on parchment, but on the living souls of men, it were an inversion of the laws of nature to disobey. In these times of ours, all intellect has fused itself into literature; literature—printed thought, is the molten sea and wonder-bearing chaos, in which mind after mind casts forth its opinion, its feeling, to be molten into the general mass, and to be worked there; interest after interest is engulfed in it, or embarked in it; higher, higher it rises round all the edifices of existence; they must all be molten into it, and anew

bodied forth from it, or stand unconsumed among its fiery surges. Woe to him whose edifice is not built of true asbest, and on the everlasting rock, but on the false sand and the drift-wood of accident, and the paper and parchment of antiquated habit! For the power or powers exist not on our earth that can say to that sea—roll back, or bid its proud waves be still.

“What form so omnipotent an element will assume—how long it will welter to and fro as a wild democracy, a wilder anarchy—what constitution and organization it will fashion for itself, and for what depends on it in the depths of time, is a subject for prophetic conjecture, wherein brightest hope is not unmingled with fearful apprehensions and awe at the boundless unknown. The more cheering is this one thing, which we do see and know—that its tendency is to a universal European commonweal; that the

wisest in all nations will communicate and cooperate ; whereby Europe will again have its true Sacred College and council of Amphictyons ; wars will become rarer, less inhuman ; and in the course of centuries, such delirious ferocity in nations, as in individuals it already is, may be proscribed and become obsolete for ever.”

My last and not least conclusive extract (for it shows the actual hold which these speculations have taken of the minds of practical men—of men out in the world, and even of *soldiers*) is from a book popular among all classes of readers—the *Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau*, written by Major Sir Francis Head. What he says of one country’s educating another, by the natural progress of books and opinion, and of the effect which this is likely to have upon governments even as remote and unwilling as Russia, is particularly worthy of attention.

The author is speaking of some bathers at whom he had been looking, and of a Russian Prince, who lets us into some curious information respecting the leading-strings in which grown gentlemen are kept by despotism :—

“ For more than half an hour I had been indolently watching this amphibious scene, when the landlord entering my room said, that the Russian Prince, G——n, wished to speak to me on some business ; and the information was scarcely communicated, when I perceived his Highness standing at the threshold of my door. With the attention due to his rank, I instantly begged he would do me the honour to walk in ; and, after we had sufficiently bowed to each other, and that I had prevailed on my guest to sit down, I gravely requested him, as I stood before him, to be so good as to state in what way I could have the good fortune to render him any service. The Prince

very briefly replied, that he had called upon me, considering that I was the person in the hotel best capable (he politely inclined his head) of informing him by what route it would be most adviseable for him to proceed to London, it being his wish to visit my country.

“ In order at once to solve this very simple problem, I silently unfolded and spread out upon the table my map of Europe ; and each of us, as we leant over it, placing a forefinger on or near Wiesbaden (our eyes being fixed upon Dover), we remained in this reflecting attitude for some seconds, until the Prince’s finger first solemnly began to trace its route. In doing this, I observed that his Highness’s hand kept swerving far into the Netherlands, so, gently pulling it by the thumb towards Paris, I used as much force as I thought decorous, to induce it to advance in a straight line ; however, finding my efforts ineffectual, I ventured

with respectful astonishment, to ask, ‘ Why travel by so uninteresting a route ’ ?

“ The Prince at once acknowledged that the route I had recommended would, by visiting Paris, afford him the greatest pleasure ; but he frankly told me that no Russian, not even a personage of his rank, could enter that capital, without first obtaining a written permission from the Emperor.

“ These words were no sooner uttered, than I felt my fluent civility suddenly begin to coagulate ; the attention I paid my guest became forced and unnatural. I was no longer at my ease ; and though I bowed, strained, and endeavoured to be, if possible, more respectful than ever, yet I really could hardly prevent my lips from muttering aloud, that I had sooner die a homely English peasant than live to be a Russian prince !—in short, his Highness’s words acted upon

my mind like thunder upon beer. And, moreover, I could almost have sworn that I was an old lean wolf, contemptuously observing a bald ring rubbed by the collar, from the neck of a sleek, well-fed mastiff dog; however, recovering myself, I managed to give as much information as it was in my humble power to afford; and my noble guest then taking his departure, I returned to my open window, to give vent in solitude (as I gazed upon the horse bath) to my own reflection upon the subject.

“Although the petty rule of my life has been never to trouble myself about what the world calls ‘politics’ — (a fine word, by the by, much easier expressed than understood) — yet, I must own, I am always happy when I see a nation enjoying itself, and melancholy when I observe any large body of people suffering pain or imprisonment. But of all sorts of imprisonment,

that of the mind is, to my taste, the most cruel ; and, therefore, when I consider over what immense dominions the Emperor of Russia presides, and how he governs, I cannot help sympathizing most sincerely with those innocent sufferers, who have the misfortune to be born his subjects ; for if a Russian Prince be not freely permitted to go to Paris, in what a melancholy state of slavery and debasement must exist the minds of what we call the lower classes ?

“ As a sovereign remedy for this lamentable political disorder, many very sensible people in England prescribe, I know, that we ought to have resource to arms. I must confess, however, it seems to me that one of the greatest political errors England could commit would be to declare, or to join in declaring, war with Russia ; in short, that an appeal to brute force would, at this moment, be at once most unscientifically to stop an im-

mense moral engine, which, if left to its work, is quite powerful enough, without bloodshed, to gain for humanity, at no expense at all, its object. The individual who is, I conceive, to overthrow the Emperor of Russia—who is to direct his own legions against himself—who is to do what Napoleon had at the head of his great army failed to effect, is the little child, who, lighted by the single wick of a small lamp, sits at this moment perched above the great steam press of the ‘Penny Magazine,’ feeding it, from morning till night, with blank papers, which, at almost every pulsation of the engine, comes out stamped on both sides with engravings, and with pages of plain, useful, harmless knowledge, which, by making the lower orders acquainted with foreign lands, foreign productions, various states of society, &c., tend practically to inculcate ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace—good will towards men.’ It has already been stated, that

what proceeds from this press is now greedily devoured by the people of Europe; indeed, even at Berlin, we know it can hardly be reprinted fast enough.

“ This child, then, — ‘ this sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,’ — is the only army that an enlightened country like ours should, I humbly think, deign to oppose to one who reigns in darkness—who trembles at day-light, and whose throne rests upon ignorance and despotism. Compare this mild, peaceful intellectual policy, with the dreadful, savage alternative of going to war, and the difference must surely be evident to everyone. In the former case, we calmly enjoy, first of all, the pleasing reflection, that our country is generously imparting to the nations of Europe the blessing she is tranquilly deriving from the purification of civilization to her own mind;—far from wishing to exterminate, we are

gradually illuminating the Russian peasant, we are mildly throwing a gleam of light upon the fetters of the Russian Prince; and surely every well-disposed person must see, that if we will only have patience, the result of this noble, temperate conduct, must produce all that reasonable beings can desire.”—*Bubbles from the Brunens of Nassau*, p. 164.

By the ‘Penny Magazine,’ our author means, of course, not only that excellent publication, but all cheaply-diffused knowledge—all the tranquil and enlightening deeds of “Captain Pen” in general—of whom it is pleasant to see the gallant Major so useful a servant, the more so from his sympathies with rank and the aristocracy. But “Pen” will make it a matter of necessity, by and by, for all ranks to agree with him, in vindication of their own wit and common sense; and when once this necessity is felt, and fasti-

diousness shall find out that it will be considered “absurd” to lag behind in the career of knowledge and the common good, the cause of the world is secure.

May princes and people alike find it out by the kindest means, and without further violence. May they discover that no one set of human beings, perhaps no single individual, can be thoroughly secure and content, or enabled to work out his case with equal reasonableness, *till all are so*, — a subject for reflection, which contains, we hope, the beneficent reason *why all are restless*. The solution of the problem is co-operation—the means of solving it is the Press. If the Greeks had had a press, we should probably have heard nothing of the inconsiderate question, which demands, why they, with all their philosophy, did not alter the world. They had not the means. They could not command a general

hearing. Neither had Christianity come up, to make men think of one another's wants, as well as of their own accomplishments. Modern times possess those means, and inherit that divine incitement. May every man exert himself accordingly, and show himself a worthy inhabitant of this beautiful and most capable world!

THE END.

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